

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A search system comprising:

2 an explicit user profile containing user-specific
3 ratings for a plurality of attributes, wherein a user
4 provides rating values for only a subset of the plurality
5 of attributes during initialization of the explicit user
6 profile;

7 a recommender system employing the explicit user
8 profile in evaluating each of a plurality of search items;
9 and

10 a controller enabling the user, while viewing
11 information regarding an item subject to evaluation by the
12 recommender system after initialization of the explicit
13 user profile, to manipulate ratings values for each of the
14 plurality of attributes associated with the item.

1 2. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the user provides rating values during initialization of
3 the explicit user profile for only:

4 one or more supersets of attributes within the
5 plurality of attributes; or

6 one or more attributes having possible values
7 defining a scope of all search items.

1 3. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 rating values are included within the explicit user profile
3 based on a content consumption history for the user.

1 4. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the recommender system employs current values within the
3 explicit user profile in evaluating each of the plurality
4 of search items during a search.

1 5. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the controller, responsive to the user entering a rating
3 value for an attribute associated with the item, either:

4 adds the attribute and associated rating value to
5 the explicit user profile if the attribute was not
6 previously rated within the explicit user profile; or

7 updates the rating value associated with the
8 attribute within the explicit user profile if the attribute
9 was previously rated within the explicit user profile.

1 6. The search system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the controller enables the user to:

3 view ratings, if any, for all attributes
4 associated with the item;

5 add a rating value for an attribute associated
6 with the item which did not previously have a rating value
7 within the explicit user profile; and

8 revise an existing rating value within the
9 explicit user profile for an attribute associated with the
10 item.

1 7. A content reception system comprising:
2 an input for receiving content and a plurality of
3 information items regarding the content;
4 an explicit user profile containing user-specific
5 rating values for a plurality of attributes, wherein a user
6 provides rating values for only a subset of the plurality
7 of attributes during initialization of the explicit user
8 profile;
9 a recommender system employing the explicit user
10 profile in evaluating each of the plurality of information
11 items; and
12 a controller enabling the user, while viewing an
13 information item after initialization of the explicit user
14 profile, to manipulate rating values for each of the
15 plurality of attributes associated with the item.

1 8. The content reception system according to claim
2 7, wherein the user provides rating values during
3 initialization of the explicit user profile for only:
4 one or more supersets of attributes within the
5 plurality of attributes; or
6 one or more attributes having possible values
7 defining a scope of all information items searched.

1 9. The content reception system according to claim
2 7, wherein the recommender system employs current rating
3 values within the explicit user profile in evaluating each
4 of the plurality of information items during a search.

1 10. The content reception system according to claim
2 7, wherein the controller, responsive to the user entering
3 a rating value for an attribute associated with the
4 information item, either:

5 adds the attribute and associated rating value to
6 the explicit user profile if the attribute was not
7 previously rated within the explicit user profile; or

8 updates a rating value associated with the
9 attribute within the explicit user profile if the attribute
10 was previously rated within the explicit user profile.

1 11. The content reception system according to claim
2 7, wherein the controller enables the user to:

3 view rating values, if any, for all attributes
4 associated with the information item;

5 add a rating value for an attribute associated
6 with the information item which did not previously have a
7 rating value within the explicit user profile; and

8 revise an existing rating value within the
9 explicit user profile for an attribute associated with the
10 information item.

1 12. A method of searching information items
2 comprising:

3 receiving content and a plurality of information
4 items regarding the content;

5 employing an explicit user profile containing
6 user-specific rating values for a plurality of attributes
7 in evaluating each of the plurality of information items,
8 wherein a user provides rating values for only a subset of
9 the plurality of attributes during initialization of the
10 explicit user profile; and

11 allowing the user, while viewing an information
12 item after initialization of the explicit user profile, to
13 manipulate rating values for each of the plurality of
14 attributes associated with the item.

1 13. The method according to claim 12, wherein the
2 user provides rating values during initialization of the
3 explicit user profile for only:

4 one or more supersets of attributes within the
5 plurality of attributes; or

6 one or more attributes having possible values
7 defining a scope of all information items searched.

1 14. The method according to claim 12, wherein the
2 recommender system employs current rating values within the
3 explicit user profile in evaluating each of the plurality
4 of information items during a search.

1 15. The method according to claim 12, wherein, in
2 response to the user entering a rating value for an
3 attribute associated with the information item, either:

4 the attribute and associated rating value are
5 added to the explicit user profile if the attribute was not
6 previously rated within the explicit user profile; or

7 a rating value associated with the attribute
8 within the explicit user profile is updated if the
9 attribute was previously rated within the explicit user
10 profile.

1 16. The method according to claim 12, wherein the
2 user is permitted to:

3 view rating values, if any, for all attributes
4 associated with the information item;

5 add a rating value for an attribute associated
6 with the information item which did not previously have a
7 rating value within the explicit user profile; and

8 revise an existing rating value within the
9 explicit user profile for an attribute associated with the
10 information item.

1 17. A signal comprising:

2 a listing of content suggestions relating to
3 content and a plurality of information items regarding the
4 content,

5 wherein the listing of content suggestions is
6 generated by employing an explicit user profile containing
7 user-specific rating values for a plurality of attributes
8 in evaluating each of the plurality of information items,

9 wherein a user provides rating values for only a
10 subset of the plurality of attributes during initialization
11 of the explicit user profile,

12 wherein the user, while viewing an information
13 item after initialization of the explicit user profile, is
14 permitted to selectively manipulate rating values for each
15 of the plurality of attributes associated with the item.

1 18. The signal according to claim 17, wherein the
2 user provides rating values during initialization of the
3 explicit user profile for only:

4 one or more supersets of attributes within the
5 plurality of attributes; or

6 one or more attributes having possible values
7 defining a scope of all information items searched.

1 19. The signal according to claim 17, wherein current
2 rating values within the explicit user profile are employed
3 in evaluating each of the plurality of information items
4 during a search.

1 20. The signal according to claim 17, wherein, in
2 response to the user entering a rating value for an
3 attribute associated with the information item, either:

4 the attribute and associated rating value are
5 added to the explicit user profile if the attribute was not
6 previously rated within the explicit user profile; or

7 a rating value associated with the attribute
8 within the explicit user profile is updated if the
9 attribute was previously rated within the explicit user
10 profile.

1 21. The signal according to claim 17, wherein the
2 user is permitted to:

3 view rating values, if any, for all attributes
4 associated with the information item;

5 add a rating value for an attribute associated
6 with the information item which did not previously have a
7 rating value within the explicit user profile; and

8 revise an existing rating value within the
9 explicit user profile for an attribute associated with the
10 information item.